

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Richard Meyers, City Manager

SUBJECT: Friday Update

DATE: January 31, 2020

Youth Advisory Council

The Cottage Grove Youth Advisory Council will be meeting on Monday, February 3, 2020 from 6:45 to 8:00 pm. They will be making preparations for the Youth Town Hall, Legislative trip to Salem and the 3rd Annual Youth Summit to be held at Willamette University. YAC members will be visiting with our State Legislators on Monday, February 17th and experiencing the activities at the Oregon Legislature – there will be no YAC meeting that evening. The YAC members will also be participating in the Youth Summit which is a gathering of Youth Advisory Councilors from around the State. The Youth Summit is organized by our friends on the Happy Valley Youth Advisory Council.

Youth Town Hall

The Cottage Grove Youth Advisory Council will be holding a Youth Town Hall on Monday, March 2nd at 5:30 pm in the City Council Chambers. The YAC has selected the topic of Youth Mental Health and has organized a panel of local mental health professionals that will be available to describe existing services available and provide tips to address issues that youth face. Youth from throughout the community are invited to come for pizza and an open and frank discussion of the issues facing youth. Adult leaders in the community are also invited to come and listen to the discussion to learn more about youth and mental health issues.

Kiosk

Now everyone can spend hours watching the Information Kiosk display that plays in the City Hall and Community Center lobby from the comfort of their own home. The Information Kiosk is a slideshow display providing the dates of City meetings, events or other information. It is now hosted on the internet and can be accessed by visiting the link on the City's webpage. The link to the slideshow can be found through the Information Kiosk page accessed through the [City News and Meetings link](#).

AARP Free Tax Help

The Cottage Grove Community Center is hosting free AARP Tax Help every Wednesday starting February 5th through April 15th. To schedule an appointment for this free service, community members are asked to arrive at the Community Center at 8:00 am to sign in for appointments.

New Year, New You...Same W-2 Tax Scam

Tax season is in full swing, which means criminals will go to great lengths to separate you from your money, your identity, or anything of value that is within their reach. They may offer seemingly legitimate "tax services" that are actually designed to steal your identity and your tax refund. Often times, criminals will lure you in with an offer of larger write-offs or refunds. Such scams might include

fake websites and tax forms that look like they belong to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in order to trick you into providing your personal information.

Due to the rise in data breaches, you should always take steps to minimize your risk of identity theft and other online-related crimes; this is especially important this time of the year. Below are some warning signs to look for and basic precautions you can take to minimize risk and avoid becoming the next victim!

Warning Signs of an Online Tax Scam

- An email or link requesting personal and/or financial information, such as your name, social security number, bank or credit card account numbers, or any additional security-related information.
- Emails containing various forms of threats or consequences if no response is received, such as additional taxes or blocking access to your funds.
- Emails from the IRS or federal agencies. The IRS will not contact you via email.
- Emails containing exciting offers, tax refunds, incorrect spelling, grammar, or odd phrasing throughout.
- Emails discussing "changes to tax laws." These email scams typically include a downloadable document (usually in PDF format) that purports to explain the new tax laws. However, unbeknownst to many, these downloads are almost always populated with malware that, once downloaded, will infect your computer.

How to Avoid Being the Victim

- **Never Send Sensitive Information in an Email:** Information sent through email can be intercepted by criminals. Make sure to consistently check your financial account statements and your credit report for any signs of unauthorized activity.
- **Secure Your Computer:** Ensure your computer has the latest security updates installed. Check that your anti-virus and anti-spyware software are running properly and receiving automatic updates from the vendor. If you haven't already done so, install and enable a firewall.
- **Carefully Select the Sites You Visit:** Safely searching for tax forms, advice on deductibles, tax preparers, and other similar topics requires great caution. NEVER visit a site by clicking on a link sent in an email, found on someone's blog, or in an advertisement. The websites you land on might look like legitimate sites, but can also be very well-crafted fakes.
- **Be Wise with Wi-Fi:** Wi-Fi hotspots are intended to provide convenient access to the internet, however, this convenience can come at a cost. Public Wi-Fi is not secure and is susceptible to eavesdropping by hackers, therefore, never use public Wi-Fi to file your taxes!
- **Look for Clear Signs:** Common scams will tout tax rebates, offer great deals on tax preparation, or offer a free tax calculator tool. If you did not solicit the information, it's likely a scam.
- **Be on the Watch for Fake IRS Scams:** The IRS will not contact you via email, text messaging, or your social network, nor does it advertise on websites. Additionally, if an email appears to be from your employer or bank claiming there is an issue that requires you to verify personal information, this is most likely a scam as well. Don't respond to these types of emails; always contact the entity directly.
- **Always Utilize Strong Passwords:** Cybercriminals have developed programs that automate the ability to guess your passwords. To best protect yourself, make your passwords difficult to guess. Passwords should have a minimum of nine characters and include uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols.

Sewer Line Repair

Thursday the Utility Crew was video recording the sewer main line in the alley behind the Cottage Grove Hotel in preparation for replacing the line this summer. During the process of videotaping the condition of the sewer line, the camera fell into a cavity under the broken sewer line and became stuck. Today the crew excavated around the location of the stuck camera and successfully removed it. They replaced approximately 12 feet of the old worn out concrete line with a new sewer grade PVC pipe. The line between Hwy 99 west to 7th Street is in very poor condition and will be replaced this year. The attached picture shows the camera stuck under the pipe.



Cottage Grove Tree Giveaway

This week the Maintenance Crew picked up 60 young Redwood and 25 Ponderosa Pine trees that were gifted from the City of Eugene for the tree giveaway February 22nd, 29th and March 7th. Next week the crew will be picking up a mix of 300 additional trees: Vine Maples, White Alder, Douglas Fir, Western Crabapple, Oregon White Oak, Caseara, and Western Red Cedar for the giveaway. Cottage Grove residents that live in the City limits will be able to have up to three trees apiece. The intent of the tree giveaway is to replace the trees City residents lost in the February 25, 2019 snowmageddon. Trees are very important to our community as they increase property values, improve air quality, lowers ambient air temperatures and are beautiful. Watch for more details about the time and location of the tree giveaway.

Blood Drive

The Cottage Grove Community Center is hosting a Blood Drive on Monday, February 10th from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm (closed for lunch 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm), bring your photo ID. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call Bloodworks at (800) 398-7888 or go to www.bloodworksnw.org/donate (sponsor code L17). Walk in are welcome.

Baby Sign Time at the Library

Families with infants are encouraged to join us at the Cottage Grove Library for “Baby Sign Time”, ideal for children 0-18 months. Come learn simple signs through songs, stories, activities and more every Thursday at 1:00 pm beginning February 6, 2020.

History of Wine Exhibit at the Library

The Cottage Grove Public Library will be hosting the Oregon Historical Society traveling exhibit called: Clink! A Taste of Oregon Wine, during the entire month of February, 2020. The Clink! Wine exhibit is a history of winemaking in Oregon and tells the stories of some of the individuals and institutions who propelled Oregon wine onto the national and international stage. Please stop by in February to view this unique and historical exhibit.

Quote of the Week

“Even if you are the only one who believes in your dream, if you are committed to it you will achieve it.”

~Kate Iroegbu~